

The religious treatise “Nahj Al-Faradis” by Mahmud Al-Bulgari (1358) as a source on the history of the Golden Horde's spiritual culture

Kazan Federal University, 420008, Kremlevskaya 18, Kazan, Russia

Abstract

© 2018 Shigabutdin Marjani Institute of History of Academy of Sciences. All rights reserved. Research objectives: To trace the history of studying the copies of the work “Nahj al-Faradis” by Mahmud al-Bulgari created in the Golden Horde period and to define its role in the spiritual culture of the Golden Horde. Materials: “Nahj al-Faradis”, a work by Mahmud al-Bulgari of the Golden Horde period. Results and novelty of the research: Written in the 14th century (1358), “Nahj al-Faradis” (The Clear Path to Paradise) by Mahmud bin 'Ali al-Bulgari represents an epic 444-page work of a theological-didactic character. The first information about “Nahj al-Faradis” was provided by the historian Shigabutdin Marjani. When listing the oldest Tatar literary monuments, he included “Nahj al-Faradis” among them. The work is one of a small number of known sources, based on which it is possible to study the literary language and spelling conventions of the Golden Horde period and their correlation with the living language and orthography of modern Tatar. At the same time, using this source, it is possible to judge the peculiarities of the functioning of Islam and the degree of development of the spiritual culture in the Golden Horde. Indeed, the work of Mahmud al-Bulgari “Nahj al-Faradis” turned out to be among the literary monuments representing the historical link between the written and literary language of the Volga region, which is characterized by the overwhelming majority of researchers as a common Turkic written tradition, and the period of the birth of the regional Starotatar language (Old Tatar). “Nahj al-Faradis” recorded rich bibliographical material - the works of Muslim theologians used by the author Mahmud al-Bulgari. Many of the works mentioned in the text are now in the book depositories of Kazan. As a legacy of medieval literature, the work “Nahj al-Faradis” plays an important role in the study of the history of the language and society of the medieval Volga region, helping to disclose the spiritual development of the peoples of the Volga-Ural region. As such, the Center for research of the Golden Horde and the Tatar khanates of the Sh. Marjani Institute of History is preparing to publish an academic translation of “Nahj al-Faradis” in Russian.

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Keywords

Golden Horde, Language traditions, Literature, Mahmud al-Bulgari, Spiritual culture, “Nahj al-Faradis”

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